

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Miner Votes Against State Budget Plan



Early today, State Representative Craig Miner, R-66th, voted against a state budget package that would increase spending by more than 12 percent and hike state taxes by \$400 million during the next two years. The budget was approved by the House of Representatives in a 100-50 vote and was expected to be debated by the State Senate later today.

Rep. Miner noted that despite having a \$700 million state surplus, the spending plan still raises taxes. In addition, the budget also uses a number of gimmicks and one-time revenues to pay for ongoing expenses. For example, of the \$700 million surplus, \$650 million is used to pay for ongoing expenses. Meanwhile the tax increases, which focus on estate taxes and the corporate surcharge, will harm the state's economy, he said.

In addition, Rep. Miner said that while certain legislators tout the budget's increased funding to municipalities as providing property tax relief, there are no provisions that require cities and towns to use the monies for that purpose. In fact, the increases, which are unsustainable in the long term, serve to make municipalities more dependent on them for future funding of local programs, he said.

"I'm unhappy with such use of unanticipated revenue to fund ongoing expenses, as it will only cause steeper tax increases in the future," said Rep. Miner. "Additionally, the increases to inheritance and business taxes will probably continue to play into people's consideration of moving out of state."

Rep. Miner noted that the spending increases, similar to others enacted in recent years, are disproportionately slanted toward Connecticut's large cities. For example, while Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven receive \$20 million, or 32 percent, of the total \$62 million increase in education funding, the student population of these cities represents only about 12 percent of all students. In addition, of the entire \$90 million increase in municipal aid, those same big cities receive \$28 million, or 31 percent, of the total increase. The total population of these cities represents only 11.4 percent of the state's total population.

Representative Miner represents the towns of Bethlehem, Litchfield, Morris, Warren and Woodbury in the General Assembly.